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TIMELY LESSONS ON TODAY'S LIVING



GEORGE HASTINGS McNAIR

Dear Reader:

May this
little book be a good
friend to you.

~~W. H. H. H.~~ H. H. H. H.

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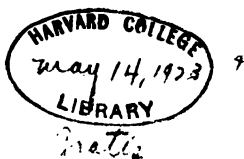
BY

GEORGE HASTINGS McNAIR



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
A Lesson on Petty Annoyance.....	5
The Tin Dipper	
Out in The Spaces	
A Lesson on Contentment.....	12
The Mud Pie	
Fruit With Thorns	
A Lesson on Right Thinking.....	17
The Brain	
Why Am I?	
A Lesson on Work.....	23
The Boulder	
An Ode to a Toad	
A Lesson on Perseverance.....	28
The Flange	
How to Be a Friend	
A Lesson on Influence.....	35
The Leaf	
Mother's Face	
A Lesson on Retribution.....	40
The Boomerang	
Pay Day	
A Lesson on Judging Others.....	46
The Tongue	
How Much Do I Owe?	
A Lesson on Fears.....	52
The Headlight	
What Matters	
A Lesson on Our Mistakes.....	58
The Plow	
Ghosts of the Past	
A Lesson on Ideals.....	64
That Star	
At Roosevelt's Grave	
A Lesson on the Greatest, Strongest and Best, 72	
The Seed Corn	
The Greatest Builder	
The March of Man	

**To
THOSE WHO HAVE NOT ARRIVED**

TIMELY LESSONS ON TODAY'S LIVING

A LESSON ON PETTY ANNOYANCE

THE TIN DIPPER

The water was sweet, cool and refreshing; especially so since the ride had been long, hot and dusty. This spring, in the heart of the hills and at the base of one of them, so well typified the desire of nature to meet the simple wants of man. However, facts other than these were what has made the recollection vivid.

The sand of the country roads had heated the motor and it was, therefore, imperative to give it several quarts of cool water. The necessity led us to the back door of a nearby farm house where we respectfully entreated the good lady within to loan us a tin dipper. There was hesitation and then followed a heated vilification of the assumptions of the autoist. Presently the request was granted under the stipulation that the dipper be returned with promptness. Her face was that of a good woman, though the lines thereof betokened the nerve tension, the over-anxiety and the querulousness expressed in the voice.

Granted that the automobilist is a veritable pirate of the highway and that he had failed to return certain

drinking utensils, yet was the attitude assumed by the farmer's wife profitable? A few five cent tin dippers had disturbed this woman's peace of mind and had robbed her of hours of joy. Moreover, these tin dipper incidents had been in control for years, since the well selected words, voiced so effectively, implied an attitude which was habitual.

How easy it is to allow the petty unessentials to monopolize our attention; the five cent dipper incidents to tantalize the spirit. Men may stand up against a great calamity with the fortitude of a saint only to fall an easy victim to a moderate fusillade of petty annoyances. Daily do we meet people of this type.

At one end of the crowded car sat a colored man thumbing a banjo and singing southern melodies. On the rear platform gathered a group of young men who essayed to institute an opposition by singing popular street songs. At the psychological moment the negro went up and down the aisle with inverted hat in hand seeking material reward for *his* part of the entertainment. A wag of the street-song group followed suit, imitating the negro perfectly. The episode divided the inmates of that car into three classes—the amused, the indifferent and the annoyed. A member of the last named group, not being able to contain himself longer, retired from the scene in audible disgust; presumably a chronic “tin dipperist.”

Our daily life is filled with irregularities beyond our control. Are we going to meet them calmly or allow them to pick our pockets of the goodies of life?

The coral takes from the running tide only those elements needed for its highest development. The animals of the field select the grass which is sweetest to the

taste and the birds of the air never molest the poisonous plant. *May we not cultivate this fine selective art?* Assimilating all which nourishes the spirit but spurning the poisons!

With mechanical devices it is friction which wears out. Is it not thus with the human machine? That which shortens the life is not work but worry, not exertion but annoyance, not merely responsibility but *uncomfortable* responsibility. So often do we invite as a wedding guest a total stranger; how frequently do we assume obligations which are not for us; how willingly we read into situations alien discomfitures!

Tin dipperists are apt to be too conscientious. Like the sister of Cinderella they take it for granted that the shoe is for them and when they put it on they almost glory in the pain of the pinch.

Far be it from our intention to teach the art of dodging disagreeable duties. If the task is ours there will be little doubt, provided we honestly try the case before the grand jury of conscience, judgment, and sound sense. Often the spirit suffers annoyance because of procrastination. Knowing that it is our duty to visit the sick, we postpone it till the mood is upon us only to bump into the agonizing mandate, "*Too Late.*" The ailing one is about again and we lose forever this particular golden opportunity. Never let the sun set on a duty which is for that day and no other. Take it by the forelock and it ceases to be formidable. It is admitted that the pricks of conscience bring many to an unhappy and immature grave. This fact only further supports the claim that if the life is to be joyful and long, it must be comfortable in body, mind, spirit. When Confucius was asked to sum up his notion of happiness he did so by the utterance of

the one word *equanimity*. Don't fear, don't fuss, don't fret, don't fume. Feel comfortable that you may be a comfort. The older I grow the more do I seek as friends people who gladden the atmosphere. Is it not thus with you? Positively the one who is supersensitive to the hurts of the uncontrolled irregularities of life is not in this category. Individuals who are "touchy" and irascible, whose sensibilities one is forever offending are not good mixers. They incumber society and are more or less of a nuisance in the office and on the street. When the tin dipper disease becomes chronic then does the unfortunate one give evidence to his cross grained disposition on all occasions. His view of the world is crooked, everything is out of joint. Looking at the bush he sees the thorn and not the rose; gazing at the puddle he notes the mud and not the reflected landscape. If there is a shoe peg in the water, he *knows* it tastes of leather and if the sun happens to shine in his bailiwick, he is *positive* it is raining somewhere else. *The good Lord deliver us from the unreasoning pessimist.* Are you one? Have you been brought to this sad state because you have allowed tin dipper incidents to unhinge your once well balanced temperament?

Susceptibility to petty annoyance inhibits development and shortens life. Sir Grump has a way of poking our light under a bushel and then sitting on that famous basket with a club in his hand. It is impossible for a laborer to do his work when hectored by mosquitoes. For a man to fully actualize himself there must be freedom of spirit. Who can grow the power of sustained concentration when the spiritual epidermis is so irritated by that mosquito, petty annoyance? For the sake of your everlasting progress, reader, either kill the insect or screen the windows of your soul against it.

Quite half of the mechanical energy of the best machines is sacrificed to friction. Are you less than fifty percent efficient because of the friction which tin dipper incidents engender? If it could be proved that one hour of fretting shortened the expectation of life one year there would be less fretting. A colt grows to be a sturdy plough horse in four years when he may pull the plough with unabated energy for twenty years. With animals the span of vigorous life is about five times the number of years required to attain maturity. Reasoning analogously man should be in his prime at seventy-five. How much is the life shortened because there is sand in the ball bearings. To the oil can, annoyed one, to the oil can! The best brand of lubricant in the market for a frictioned situation is *humor*. A man who cannot see the funny side is not well balanced. The "bump" is an instinctive area which needs cultivation. *He who laughs at the little things is saving his energy for the big things.* Greet with mirth your inclination to slam the door because it pinches your fingers or to toss the hammer through the window because it hit the wrong nail.

There are numerous incidents which cannot be laughed at, cannot be cured, and yet must be endured. Toward such cultivate a profound indifference. Let the thought be, "What care I?" "It will be all the same in a hundred years." "It is a little matter anyway." "Forget it." To the great essayist some one came with the warning, "O Mr. Emerson, do you not know that the solar system is coming to an end within a fortnight?" "Very well", replied he, "I can get along nicely *without* the solar system."

Nine-tenths of what we see comes from within and we usually find what we are looking for. An eastern

prince commissioned two emissaries. The duty of one was to bring to the prince every specimen of weeds in the kingdom, whereas the other was to collect all the varieties of flowers. In due season the first reported, "O prince, the province is a kingdom of weeds." "Not so," objected the second, "your province is a kingdom of flowers."

On a night when all is quiet and you are reclining in your easy chair before the grate, every muscle of the body relaxed, don't forget that your mind also needs a Morris chair. If the tin dipper incidents are still insistent, go out into the open and permit fancy to softly pillow the "mental fatigue." Breathe deeply and let the lungs and heart drink in the ozone of the air and the goodness of God. *Relax, unbend, let go!* Sigh the sigh of the contented and smile the smile of the joyful.

Who would sell his soul's happiness for a five cent tin dipper?

A ship signalled a sister vessel, "Send us water, we are dying from thirst." "Let down your buckets then," came the reply, "you are in the mouth of the Amazon." Are there people sailing the high sea of life who are dying from thirst, though the sweet Amazonic waters of beauty and goodness are all about? To them the little tin dippers of tribulation are given that they may drink of this water of life freely.

OUT IN THE SPACES

When the struggles of the field rend you,
And your mind thinks in vain;
When the sorrows of the world bend you,
And your heart aches with pain;
Go out into the larger spaces,
Where thoughts are free as air;
Reach forth for your royal maces,
For God will meet you there.

When the hardships of your niche grieve you,
And your hand slakes its hold;
When the comforts of your friend leave you,
And your life chills with cold;
Go out into the starry spaces,
Where nerves are free from care;
Go forth with your strongest paces,
For God will meet you there.

When the workings of the world balk you,
And your soul fills with hate;
When the memories of your brain mock you,
And Sir Hope locks his gate;
Go out into the throbbing spaces,
Where love is what you bear;
Give forth from your golden vases,
For God will meet you there.

A LESSON ON CONTENTMENT

THE MUD PIE

A boy prince, while traversing the outskirts of the capital city, came upon a group of youngsters engaged in making mud pies. "O mother," exclaimed the prince, "do let me make pies with those children." "Ridiculous, my son," ejaculated the mother, "soon you will become king of W. and for you to make mud pies with common children would be an undignified procedure." "Oh," wailed the prince, "I would sooner make mud pies with those boys than to be king of W."

Doubtless among the mud pie group there was a lad who looked with envious eyes at the handsome equipage of the prince and his mother. It is quite possible that the half formed thought of all those children was, "If I could only be prince of W., I would ask for nothing more."

In this attitude the grown-up is much of a child. The well dressed woman begrudges the good fortune of her better garbed sister and the owner of a first class automobile envies him who has a more recent model. The barefoot boy of the street cries because he cannot be the well dressed youth of the office, and the well dressed youth of the office grumbles because he cannot be the millionaire boss of the concern, and the millionaire boss of the concern mourns because he cannot shake off his responsibilities and be like the barefoot boy of the street. *Here is the circle of discontent.*

What a disgruntled collection we are! No matter

how much we have, we want more. No matter what position we occupy, we seek another.

Count on your finger tips friends who are satisfied with their lot and confess that you start with the thumb and end with the thumb.

A man may retire on the advertised statement, "I have made enough," but should we be so bold as to inquire of his private secretary we would discover that the man has thousands making more for him at the rate of 6%.

The strongest longings of the soul are the oldest and there is no craving older than this desire for more. It is the cosmic urge which has lifted man up from the jungle to the castle. It is the screw-propeller which has raised him from a gibbering Simian to a civilized master.

A temperate yielding to this cosmic urge is a sacred trust but the unholy scramble which is now upon us must end in the loss of our most cherished ideals. More, more regardless of cost, is a slogan against which no nation can permanently stand. For the fact that America is the land of opportunity we are thankful, but for the fact that she is also the land of the dollar we are fearful.

In history Florence was known as The City of Lilies and it is a folk lore tale that in the heart of a Florentine citizen was found, perfectly preserved, a beautiful white lily. What shall we find in the heart of the American citizen? An eagle flattened against a *silver dollar*? God forbid!

Shall we seek most the golden rule or the golden dollar? Here is *the* question of the immediate future. Is not this struggle of 105 million people for more based upon the hallucination that *added means brings added happiness?*

Who are the rulers of the kingdoms and queendoms of perfect joy? Are they the millionaires who have all the indulgences which money can buy? Are they the generals who have all the homage which a people can give? Or the scholars who have all the learning which books can afford?

Search the bailiwick of your acquaintanceship, historical or otherwise, with a view of discovering the happiest inhabitant. Admit that he is neither a Rockefeller, a Grant, a Jefferson nor an Emerson. You find him only an Ordinary. Possibly his income is so small that you refuse to state it because you care not to add to the world's spirit of skepticism. His learning is insufficient to escape entirely the cognomen "ignorant" and his personal attributes are not above criticism. When we analyze the life of this prodigy we are forced to the conclusion that he is happy because of the observance of the one short rule, "*Want less than you can have.*" Here is contentment; here is at least passive happiness, which is levels higher than active misery.

To learn to be contented with one's lot, this is to live.

If the unhealthy craving which makes you want another's place is poisoning your life of happiness, do you know that there are antidotes for that poison?

There was once a donkey that wanted to be his master's lapdog. The toilsome and monotonous days were not for him. He broke away from his stall to seek the higher life. Finding his master, the donkey tried to bark his pleasure but alas! it was only a bray. Undismayed he jumped into his master's lap, knocking him over, and in trying to caress his cheek he bit his ear. Finally the would-be lap dog in search of dainty morsels hopped upon the table so clumsily as to break it down

and smash the dishes. At this the servants rushed in and clubbed the "eary" impostor out of the house. As he limped back to his stall the donkey was heard to say, "How could I know that a mule was never meant to be a lap dog?"

Probably our lot is just the lot where we ought to be. Leastwise it is the place which we must fill fully ere we become worthy of a larger lot. Be it remembered that the larger the lot the more the tax and who should pay the extra other than the owner of the lot? *Added means brings added responsibilities.*

Methinks if you live on "Nabob Avenue" it would be well to occasionally take a walk through the "Patch." There is no man so miserable but that he may find some one else more so.

Let the palace feed the hovel and those who can see lead the blind.

The most effectual way to quiet one's *own* soul is to quiet *another's*.

Discontented one, *do something for somebody.*

True happiness means not passive contentment more than active achievement.

Let us be contented with our lot but never satisfied with our accomplishments. Let it be more money, if such can be secured without selling priceless jewels like unto health, rectitude and human sympathy.

Earthly bliss means contentment plus the fullest actualization of our highest possibilities.

A soul rich in peace and poise, patience and perseverance, giving its best to the world, this makes for true happiness.

If mud pie toil comes to you be content though never satisfied till *your* make means the best.

FRUIT WITH THORNS

O'er hill and dale a boy, barefoot to wander,
Because the day was made for him to squander;
Sharp eyed, soon saw a vine thrust out from under,
So black with fruit to make a live boy wonder
What star had shown just him the way to Heaven;
At once he claimed the vine and ate till seven;
Arose, but felt the thorns hold fast his clothing.
At them he struck a hand too filled with loathing;
The thorns then tore and rent and made a bleeding,
Which left deep rage to mind and soul a feeding.
Sweet Paradise was now clearly Perdition;
All things in it twisted, out of condition.
Poisoned were trees and vines, flowers and grasses,
By attitude of mind and ugly slashes.

Heaven and Hell, in truth, are not in spaces,
Despite beliefs for years would make them places;
Within is Hell dug deep without correction,
Life force, a swift current in wrong direction!
Is this old world so filled with ways of reaching
The tree and vine of truth to give this teaching:
That life has thorn and fruit beside each other,
To show to us the way to live together?
Virtue beside the fault in man and woman,
Because the seed in them is somewhat human;
Rooted in clay, above dark clouds a rolling,
Wisdom and mercy nurtured and a growing.
Accept, mankind, the fruit with thorns, as leaven
To raise your life in strength to heights of Heaven.

A LESSON ON RIGHT THINKING

THE BRAIN

A farmer agreed to deliver to a purchaser three small pigs. Before daylight on a winter's morning he caught the younglings, popped them into gunny sacks and, after tying them securely, placed them in the bottom of a high boxed sleigh. The pigs were then transported nine miles and left in the clean straw of their new pen. Doubtless the swine considered the cleanliness of their changed environment an insult to pig nature for the following night they escaped and made tracks towards home. The fugitives failed to follow the road since the tell-tale snow revealed the fact that their route varied little from a bee line, across fields, under fences and through the woods. The distance was covered by *two* of the pigs during the night, for the farmer's surprised ears caught their familiar grunts and squeals early the following morning. The third little pig, evidently a martyr to the cause, had dropped by the wayside.

How did these proverbially stupid animals know the way home?

Put a college professor into a gunny sack and after carrying him nine miles over an unknown road, give him his freedom. Will he take the short cut home? Does the unexpected fog discommode the wild duck or the dense jungle confuse the stray fox? Whence this remarkable

wisdom? We call it instinct and as it seems to be infallible we may reason that blundering man should give more attention to its development.

Ages ago in the dense forests of western Europe there lived the cave bear, the tiger, the mastodon and also a weaker animal. A modernite, viewing the struggle for the survival from his airship, would reason thus: The weaker animal has neither the strength of the bear, the stealth of the tiger nor the giant size of the mastodon. He possesses no sharp claws to tear with, no pointed tusks to hook with; therefore, in the struggle for survival this weakling must surely perish.

Without warning a cataclysmic twist was given to the crust of the earth and the temperature of that section dropped from torrid to frigid. The large and ferocious animals either migrated to the south or froze to death, but this weakling put on furs, built a fire and remained in the jungle, master of all he surveyed. The observer failed to give credit to that three millimeters of gray matter just under the skull of the supposed weakling. A weapon by which he has won the name *man*. The *instinct* of the larger animals counseled flight whereas the *thought power* of men planned a victory.

Instinct is infallible though *nonprogressive* while thought is fallible and *progressive*.

By the power of progressive thought man has climbed to his high state of kingship.

The horse of today is no wiser than was Bucephalus, the war horse of Alexander the Great, whereas the average schoolboy of the present is wiser even than was the great Alexander, who died a degenerate.

To the wisdom of his ancestors man has been able to add a bit of his own. Standing upon the shoulders of

those who have gone before each generation is given a broader vision till now man's head is near the clouds.

The call of the future is for progressive thinking.

At the time of Alexander it was expedient to grow lumps on the arms and legs that man might fight; now it is wise to grow lumps on the head that man may think. *Then it was the survival of the fighter; now it is the survival of the thinker.*

As the torch fires of the hills summoned the mountaineers to arms, so let the flags of our schoolhouses summon our citizens to the *importance of right thinking.*

What is thinking and how can I educate myself to do more of it, are two practical questions.

When a man uses an earned dollar to do the work of two he has been thinking. When a woman takes a last season's five dollar hat and makes it look like a ten dollar product just out of the shop, she has thought.

Right thinking obtains when one selects the very best means at hand and adjusts them to the highest end.

Two clerks enter the employ of a department store. Mr. Think Right cogitates as follows: "I am going to be worth more than my job. I am going to be courteous, honest and industrious. I am going to make my employer's business my own and do all in my power to advance the good name of the concern." Mr. Think Wrong adjusts himself according to these notions: "I am going to work only enough to keep my job. I am going to court the favor of the manager and pull all the wires in sight. I am going to look out for 'yours truly' and do all in my power to advance his interests." To say that Think Right becomes head clerk while Think Wrong loses his job is only stating a plain work-a-day fact.

Adjustment and cooperation stand for ideas which

bulge large in the struggle for success. The first is a matter of thinking, the second of loyalty.

If young men would rationalize the situation before venturing, there would be less gambling, fewer drunkards, infrequent failures.

No thought and *wrong thought* are the two main gates to Gehenna. Isn't it about time that these gates were swung to?

For the individual, right thinking adds to the span of years and makes for superlative happiness.

The spirit which we call "I" uses the brain to become acquainted with the material world. It is a momentous fact that somewhere in this dome of ours is a reception room where spirit and matter meet. Were it not for the brain, the spirit would be in absolute darkness. It is the function of education to equip the brain, to make of it a sharp and handy tool that the human personality within may cut its way to the best of the material world.

It has been proved that the personality uses certain portions of the brain for particular work. One portion hears for us, another talks for us, while a third does all our thinking.

When one undertakes a new interest, a new portion of the brain is cultivated. By thus keeping the brain young it is highly probable that life may be extended. May not the spring of youth be under your own hat? If you want to keep young, cultivate a new interest, till a new area of the brain. *Be an original thinker all your days.*

To think new thoughts is a fascinating game which many have never learned to play. Few things are more inspiring than to think out one's own ideas and to clothe

them with appropriate words. Let us think *our* thoughts into the common places of life. Let us see the ages in the pebble and measure the sunshine in the coal.

Read less and think more. Stuffing oneself with facts without thought leads to mental indigestion. *We should read less news which is not true and more editorials which make us think.*

At the door of the mind stand two sentinals, educated conscience and educated judgment. Allow nothing to enter the citadel of the intellect which is not approved by these two guardians.

Do a little judicious thinking every day.

The mind of a good man is a Metropolitan Museum in which thought has hung masterpieces of power and beauty.

I am acquainted with a woman over ninety years old whose look is a veritable blessing. Why? Because now she has little to do but to view beautiful pictures in the art gallery of memory. Pictures hung in the sweetness and unselfishness of a life well spent.

Wrong thought makes youth a disappointment, middle life a failure, old age a regret.

Right thought makes youth an inspiration, middle life a success, old age a benediction.

WHY AM I?

Why, stranger, was I born?
Sues the miller as he grinds his corn.
And in his quest he diligently makes
The finest flour ever put into cakes.
Thus the miller, of his own selection,
Gives true answer to the mighty question.

Why, stranger, do I live?
Asks the doctor as he succor gives.
And in his quest he modestly grows
To the highest skill that humanity knows.
Thus the doctor, of his own volition,
Gives true answer to the mighty question.

Why, stranger, do I remain?
Plies the teacher as he trains the brain.
And in his quest he earnestly strives
To stamp nobility on youthful lives.
Thus the teacher, of his own election,
Gives true answer to the mighty question.

Why, stranger, did I come?
Asks the mother as she saves the home.
And in her quest she cannot falter;
She lays her life on the family altar!
Thus the mother by her own affection,
Gives true answer to the mighty question.

A LESSON ON WORK

THE BOULDER

Life is a wilderness through the footpath of the unknown. The way is beset by boulder after boulder of difficulty. As the various animals meander along the way each adopts a characteristic method of overcoming the "boulder-difficulty." The bird approaches and at once flies over the boulder; the ground hog burrows under the boulder; the snake crawls around it, while man neither flies over, burrows under nor crawls around. *Man in his might takes a crowbar and rolls the boulder away.*

The other animals follow the leading strings of instinct while man advances through thought power.

The creatures of instinct suggest a way which may be followed only by members of their kind whereas man clears the path for all. This would be kingly were it not for the fact that this same man after removing the boulder is prone to stand on its highest point, wave his crowbar in the air and cry, "See what I have done!"

The exercise incident to the removing of the boulder should develop additional power to the end that the larger boulder beyond might be removed with greater ease. But instead of proceeding to the next order of business like a sensible animal this man must needs pause to megaphone his importance into the ears of his inferiors. What a highbrowed simpleton he is to thus belittle his kingly accomplishment and detract from his own usefulness!

Life is a rough journey at best. The path is seventy

odd years long and beset by impediment after impediment which must be overcome if man is to attain his own. The thinking biped cannot expect to retain his manliness until he becomes a boulder roller, and the only lesson which the first boulder can have for him is that there is a larger one beyond which needs his attention. He may think that one boulder is enough and that the feat warrants his taking a vacation. There are two arguments against such an assumption. If he loiters within the shade of the initial boulder for long, his muscles will become flabby, his brain cells will commence to ossify and shortly he will find himself a colorless mollycoddle, who deserves not the respect even of that snake which could only crawl around the boulder. Moreover, if he fails to roll away the next boulder, it will ever remain in the path an obstruction to all who journey. On that particular boulder nature has written with dutiful finger, "*This is for you.*"

When one withdraws from active life people say there are a thousand to take his place. Not so. Here is one of the fallacies of human thought. Nature never repeats herself and when you find two grains of sand or two blades of grass just alike then you may argue in favor of a substitute. *Do your work or your work remains undone forever.*

The product of man's labor in this world is like a leaky roof. Look where you will and you may see daylight through it. Every crack and break stands for some work unfinished. Like the shingles of the roof one man's work overlaps another's but in no case can one shingle be made to take the place of two.

A useful man retires at fifty with the thought, "Now I shall enjoy myself," and when in seeking that joy he

finds it not, then does he become restless, reckless and permanently unsatisfied. Joy is a fickle sprite since she forsakes the most ardent lover to follow after one who seeks her not. There is no joy like the unsought joy and no blessedness like that born of an ardent task well done. *Let it be the purpose of every world's worker to die in the harness; to die rolling boulders.*

The call to duty is not one-sided. The help you give is returned to you in double measure. Every lump removed means an added lump in the back of the head.

Dodging disagreeable duties makes for weakness and coating them with sugar removes their strength-giving power.

If life were a macadam highway edged with rose beds and pillowed couches, man would be a monkey yet, but since the route is a rock-ribbed path through wild cabbage patches and desolate morains, man is a *man*.

No one can appreciate his blessings until he has spelled the value of a dollar in backache and beaded brow.

World progress means world struggle; the two terms are coextensive.

No progress means no struggle and no struggle, no progress. What is true of the whole is true of the individual.

We admit that the world's struggle also kills. If there are two million children in our beloved land working their dear little bodies to death it is due to the fact that other strugglers have not done their duty.

Struggle kills because you and I are not rolling boulders to the limit of our ability.

Drop your megaphone, shoulder your crowbar and on to the next boulder.

AN ODE TO A TOAD

Old Mister Toad, whose abode
Is under a stone in the road,
Moved from his hiding place, hippity hop,
Observed my big voice and came to a stop.
"You are so awkward and slow in your gait,
Mister Toad, your life, so drab, don't you hate?"
To answer my question a fly came around,
When a lightning tongue flashed forth without sound.
Aha, thought I, not so slow as I said,
As along I wandered shaking my head.

Old Mister Toad, whose abode
Is under a stone in the road,
Suddenly treated me to a surprise,
Coming to the garden before sunrise.
"Why were you made such a cold, useless clod?"
Asked I of Old Toad as I kicked the sod.
Then, when I studied the toad's solemn mein,
A hundred bugs were no more to be seen.
My goodness, thought I, we would surely die,
If toads were not made to eat bug and fly.

Old Mister Toad, whose abode
Is under a stone in the road,
Hopped to the pool for reasons of his own,
Wanting, no doubt, to meditate alone.
Said I to Sir Toad, "You prosy old thing,
I should split my sides to hear you sing."

Then, to give answer to my slurring thought,
The sweetest music that ever was wrought
Came to my ear and compelled me to think
Myself no wiser than the long lost link.

Old Mister Toad, whose abode
Is under a stone in the road,
Taught me a truth I can never forget:
Mother nature's house is seldom for let;
Each room and cupboard is duly filled
To express her thought and completely build
A home for people like you and me,
That we may live to perfectly see
The great thing in nature is life to the fill,
Doing its utmost to express God's will.

A LESSON ON PERSEVERANCE

THE FLANGE

There was a disposition to doff our hats to the monster, so significant was the implied power. This iron-jacketed Goliath, No. 99, was no wheezing freight engine but a high brow of the daily limited class. Just how many souls the locomotive had carried to safety at the rate of sixty miles an hour we knew not, but there it stood a mighty example of harmonized speed and security. As we viewed the puffing giant there was much to interest us—the black smokestack, the shining whistle, the great boiler and the ever ready pilot. But none of these claimed our attention to the exclusion of that insignificant rim of iron circling the inside of the drive wheel. It is this *flange* which keeps the engine to the track and enables it to make the run without fear of ditching the train. Around the bend and across the switches this inch and a half of unnoticed iron holds true; through the cuts, over the bridges on and on these tons of rolling steel move with a certainty unquestioned by those who have trusted their lives to the perfect work of the little flange. Finally No. 99 swings into its allotted stall under that mass of masonry called the Grand Central; the man with a megaphone voice announces its arrival and the passengers tumble out in hurried confusion, intent upon the work of the day—all made possible by the iron soul of the humble flange

which has kept the spinning wheel to the rail despite the pull and push of the crooked way.

Human engines are there by the thousands that have run into the ditches of despair, off the bridges of recklessness, over the embankments of failure because of the weakness of the flange.

What is this bit of iron in the make-up of a man which holds him to the trunk line of endeavor? This flange of character which, in defiance of the curves, the switches and the grades of life, brings one safely to the Grand Central of his cherished ideal. Some call it perseverance, others stick-to-itiveness or tenacity of purpose. It is that characteristic which finds one still fighting after all others have run to cover. It is that pertinacious little genius of the soul that will not be downed though the gods of the heavens strike him with their thunder bolts and the steam roller of man iron him flat. Up gets he and at it again as if nothing had happened. This never-give-up-ness of human effort is the bone and sinew of achievement. Just as a piece of coal may represent ages of sunshine and a phial of perfume acres of flowers, so compressed into this one quality is the essence of any success. For one may have a high purpose, good habits, natural ability and fine equipment and yet without the flange of perseverance these desirable qualities will only the more quickly run the life into the sand bank of failure. *The ability of sustained effort—this is the desideratum.*

Examine the human wrecks along the trunk line of life. Here is a college graduate eking out an existence as a carrier of garbage. He is a product of soft pedagogy. Born with a silver spoon in his mouth, his mind has been fed with the denatured products of a moneyed

civilization. His bills have been paid by his father, his thesis written by his teacher, his life work selected by his friend. Denied the privilege of toil as a necessity and poverty as a condition, how could he develop manhood? Perseverance is the product of adversity. One might as well attempt to make a flange without iron as to grow "stick-to-itiveness" without the spur of necessity. The poverty stricken "dunce" (?) of the school outruns the pampered honor man because in his pressing need he has learned the art of sustained labor. Lost somewhere between five and twenty a man, an original, persevering man; no reward is offered for he is gone forever: lost along the downy way of sentimental nonsense.

All are shackled with the limitations of inheritance and environment which in themselves furnish the opportunity for developed perseverance. We would not imply that roses may be grown from cabbages, nor apple trees from thistle down; we are simply making a plea for those cabbage plants whose cells contain the nascent ability to grow excellent cabbages. Because of the law of limitation there are many misfits; bankers who ought to be farmers, doctors who ought to be blacksmiths and preachers who ought to be book agents. If our world conditions were free, a man would gravitate towards his true work like iron filings toward the magnet. Such perfect freedom is for the future. The present age is one of adjustment; of training a manhood which will make good anywhere.

There is a plausible theory to the effect that the nervous energy of the human make-up is deposited in layers. Left to one's own inclinations one draws upon the lower layers only. With the indolence and indifference

of a savage, many never disturb the higher layers. Just as there are sights and sounds which neither the eye can see nor the ear can hear—possibly beautiful pictures and exquisite music which the world will never sense—so here are innumerable granaries of energy lost to humanity. If perchance Dame Necessity comes our way brandishing a switch, or if that slave driver, Adversity, stands over us with club in hand, then do we bend to our work with an ardor which must utilize the upper layers. The cold air of need fans the fire of the soul till the combustible cells of the highest shelf are burned. So it is that an honored few give to the world all they have. *But through perseverance any man may find himself completely and use himself wholly in the uplift of humanity.* You may be a misfit, a round peg in a square hole, but if you persevere may you not work yourself so thoroughly into that four cornered cavity as to fit it perfectly? *Why wait for the hurt of necessity's switch?*

Of the world's laborers there are two classes, those who hate their vocation and those who love it. We like to do that in which we excel. If the task is yours, persevere in doing it well; study it at every angle with a view of executing a perfect work. Persevere in this and your task of hate becomes a labor of love. It is stated that a right-minded man can be what he pleases, if he only perseveres. For you, this is too sweeping to be convincing, yet remember that Demosthenes, the Greek, who talked to the waves for years became the greatest orator of his time. Don't forget Disraeli, the despised Jew, who lived down the hate of a proud people to become their Prime Minister. And recall the life of Lincoln, the untutored boy of the woods, who forced his way to the White House to become the great-

est President of a great people. To prove its quality, perseverance must have something to work upon. It cannot make a success out of nothing. That the iron flange is aided much by the tremendous weight of the locomotive is of vital consequence. This inch or more of projecting metal would be ineffective were the engine above made of pasteboard. Perseverance must be sustained by weight of character. The wheels of time do what they will with men of paste and paper. Those who are willing to give thought to these large questions of daily living are not of this stamp. They have some good habits, a suggestion of ability and a longing to grow. *To this type we say that the flange of perseverance will enable them to win.*

The world weeps over the monuments of unfinished work. Here are the remains of a helpful manuscript which succumbed to the disease of "sometime;" there lies the corpse of a good resolution unable to resist the contagious "next time;" yonder is the marbled body of a noble aspiration, a victim of a "good time." If there could be a resurrection day for these, how greatly would the world be enriched! Energy must be focused to make perseverance effective. The ten talented individual often fails to find himself. Because of his very versatility his energy becomes diffused; his effort scattered. Jack of all trades is a bold robber, who deserves life sentence.

With a character of some weight and with focused ability, mediocrity can attain a reasonable ideal, if there be perseverance.

From the threshold of a log schoolhouse in the middle west stepped many men of efficiency. Perhaps their distinction was due to the spirit of this motto, which

was found nailed to the door: "Hold fast to the Finish." Isn't there enough iron in your blood to hold fast to the finish? The odds may be against you; the opinion of the crowd may oppose you; your very nature may create a resisting residuum. If you have started on the right track, glide on! Over-ride every obstacle! "*Hold fast to the Finish!*"

The way is long and tortuous and the grinding wears woefully the unyielding flange of your spirit but hold fast to the finish and then—when you reach the Grand Central of that beloved ideal only to find that you are quite exhausted, rest in peace since the greatest honor on earth is, *To be used up in the Service.*

Hold fast, engines all, hold fast! May the clanking of the iron never cease. To the Master Engineer the sound is most dear; that chunk, chunk, chunk of the up grade pull!

HOW TO BE A FRIEND

If you would be a friend of mine,
And wear and wear till the end of time;
Then ask me not to conform to rule,
To mend my way as a pupil in school;
But measure my mood and follow the trend
Of mind and heart and temperament's bend.

If you would be a friend in need,
And add to my joy and earthly meed;
Then soften your blow against temper and fault,
And ask me seldom to lower my vault;
Yet lighten my load and ballast my boat
By seeing the thing as if wearing my coat.

If you would be a friend of choice,
And lend to my thought a ready voice;
Then don't desert when I go my way,
And refuse to take your plan for the day.
Were it intended that I be like you,
Then why did God create me, too?

If you would be a friend so fine,
And inspire my life to the end of time;
Then judge me not from a neighbor's view,
But cash me in as I'm known to you;
Just mingle your spirit with mine, and then
Through a thousand years you'll be my friend.

A LESSON ON INFLUENCE

THE LEAF

It is only a leaf, why heed its fall? Because as it timidly drops toward the earth it heralds a truth which, in its magnitude, fills all space.

Declares the leaf, "Though I move down towards the earth, yet the earth moves up toward me."

Between divisions of matter, large and small, the attraction is always mutual; it is never one-sided. So predicates the law of gravitation. Is it presumptive to assume the operation of a similar law in the immaterial world? Between human beings, large and small, is not the influence mutual? Is it ever one-sided?

To remark that the earth pulls the leaf down is commonplace, yet the converse of this is quite unknown to thousands and tens of thousands.

The world is teeming with individuals possessed with a negative demeanor, a timidity of speech and act which is pathetic to behold. To these let me say, *The leaf pulls the earth up!*

You may doubt your ability; you may think yourself small; your place in life may seem narrow; under the shadow of the blues, you may count yourself worthless. Only a dry, dead leaf. Pause! Think! Remember! The leaf moving above *pulls the earth up*. The hard, bespotted, old earth pulled up by a tiny leaf!

Where is the personality which cannot become as

weighty as the leaf? Such a spirit moving in a higher plane, only a trifle higher, but *moving*, pulls the selfish old world up.

Appreciate your importance. Realize that when you came down to this sphere from God's orchard, only a baby leaf, there was a place waiting for you, and this was not a secluded spot under the hedge but out in the open; out in the broad field of opportunity.

At the granite quarries of Syene from whence came all of the enormous obelisks of Egypt, men found one huge block partly chiseled. Miles away in the ruins of an unfinished temple was discovered the niche for which this stone was designed.

If you don't fill your niche it will never be filled.

The Public is sometimes a bully; a swaggering Blue-beard to those whom he can browbeat. Replace your cloak of timidity with one of modest courage. Square your shoulders and step up to Sir Public, shake your finger at him and proclaim in stentorian tones, "You are wrong! I am I, and I am here for a purpose! Yonder is my niche and by all that is efficient I shall fill it!"

The only success I know is that which gives of its full self to the uplift of the world. Every celled capacity developed completely and then devoted generously to human betterment. This requires confidence, not diffidence; initiative, not apology; steadfastness, not vacillation.

To underrate one's talents is weakness and to be bashful is a sin. In this day and generation the long call for efficiency is too insistent to excuse timidity or to pardon habitual cringing.

Easy to preach but hard to practice, some one ventures. Granted. Yet, what men have done, men can

do. Better, men can do *more* than anything they have yet accomplished. Right thinking made dynamic in right action will give confidence to the most diffident, and soul plus to the most negative.

How may you grow a positive nature? *By losing sight of yourself that you may find yourself.*

Lose sight of your hands and you find deftness. Lose sight of your posture and you find grace. Lose sight of your desire to impress and you find yourself impressing. Lose sight of yourself as a nobody and you find yourself as a somebody. This makes for that "plusness" of influence which some large souls possess.

Give yourself exercise in thinking your own thoughts and forming your own opinion. Reading followed by meditation is not so good as meditation followed by reading. Grow deep conviction based on sound argument. A man who believes things and knows why, cannot have wormlike attitudes nor butterfly thoughts.

Guard your self-respect as you would guard your pocket book. Care for your personal appearance so that when you look into a mirror you are reasonably well satisfied with what you see.

To put a ten dollar hat on what appears to be a twenty-five cent man is hard on the hat, conversely to place what seems to be a twenty-five cent hat on a ten thousand dollar man is hard on the man.

Do nothing that will make you seem like a vender of damaged goods.

Look people in the eye and cultivate a sensible conceit.

It is wiser for you, timid one, to maintain a forward and an upward rather than a backward and a downward

look. If the publican, whose gaze was glued to the ground, had lifted his sad eyes to Heaven, his blessing would have been richer.

Above all, be steadfast in accomplishing that noble task which you have set for yourself. That bully, the public, steps aside for him who has *purpose* etched upon his countenance.

Now you know that you have an influence and that it can be made to radiate its uplifting power as the heated air pushes out from the fiery furnace.

Every hour you are influencing some one in some way. Every time you walk the street you preach fifty sermons.

To your task, Tiny Leaf, to your task! It is yours to teach the ignorant and to heal the sick! It is yours to lift!

MOTHER'S FACE

A face in the window we saw and hung
In mem'ry's gallery and there it clung
Thru fugitive years to approaching age,
To measure our life like a weather gauge.

The face in the window, aglow with smiles,
Discovered new strength to overcome miles
By feeding our mind and clamoring soul
With noblest ambition to reach our goal.

And when attacked by a perverted germ,
The face in the window then held us firm,

Till the impulse passed and branded no mark
To weaken the stays of our sailing barque.

When in the run we attempted to shirk,
Giving too little to every day work;
The face in the window brought us to shame,
And made us play a strong rallying game.

When, then, temptation slackened our pace,
Enticed our will to abandon the race;
The face in the window urged us along,
Metered our spirit to a morning song.

And when cruel sorrow bombarded our heart,
And pierced us thru with a steel tempered dart;
The face in the window lifted us up
To drink our fill of the purified cup.

The face in our mem'ry, we love and keep,
Is the face of our mother so strong and sweet;
Because her influence has kept us true,
God hallow motherhood the broad world thru!

A LESSON ON RETRIBUTION

THE BOOMERANG

The boomerang is a bent stick possessing the unique characteristic of returning and dropping near the person who hurled it. Little did that black man of the cave realize that as he flung his weapon out into space, he likewise flung with it an idea that should vibrate down thru the ages to finally enter the brain of his 20th century cousin. And just as the boomerang was one of the most marvelous discoveries of barbarism so this idea, the boomerang philosophy, is one of the most potent agencies of civilization. Says the law of gravity, what goes up must come down; says the law of the boomerang, what goes *out* must come *back*. What one deposits in the great bank of the world's memory returns to one again after many days. Surely we reap what we sow whether the harvest is to our liking or not. According to Newton, to every action there is an equal and contrary reaction. We get from the world what we give to it. *Verily in habit and character we are boomerang products.*

Luck is another name for pluck since position may be somewhat a matter of accident, yet position no more accurately measures the size of the man than does the pod measure the size of the bean.

No, success means development in well-being and well-doing. Nature's department store offers no bargain sales in this development. Success is never auctioned

off at half price. Would you have it? Then pay for it, is the immutable law of the boomerang. Would you be strong? Then work. Would you be wise? Then think. Would you be happy? Then be kind. Do friends gather about you? Then you have been hurling friendly boomerangs. Is your heart blessed with contentment and your soul filled with peace and good will? Then you have been hurling earnestness-of-purpose and nobility-of-spirit boomerangs.

How much alike we all are! We are surprised to find great men so human. Surely familiarity breeds contempt because we see in others faults we deplore in ourselves. The stuff of which men are made comes from one granary. A great man is a very ordinary man plus the unusual development of *one* quality. Theodore Roosevelt was much like other men plus a little more energy. Abraham Lincoln was just like us plus a little more honesty. Thomas Arnold was an ordinary teacher plus a little more earnestness. Thus superiority is measured by what follows the *plus sign*. The superior teacher is he who does a few things for human kind without being told; who sees beyond that little wonder god of the class room, the course of study, and who discharges a duty or two not required by the laws of the system.

Every age has its peculiar call and the preeminent one of today is apparent. We hear its echo from every clime and people. It comes from the swarthy savage of the Amazon; from the wizened waif of the sweat shop; from the innocent child of the kindergarten:—help, help! *help me to help myself*. Every true teacher sees in the eye of every child that human appeal for help. She fairly hears the great man inside struggling for freedom.

And know you not that the law of the boomerang insists that to work for all is the best way to work for self? *Altruism and not egoism is the capstone of civilization.*

Thoreau suggests that youth gathers the material to build a bridge from the earth to the moon, but old age stumbles in, kicks it down and builds a woodshed. The bridge builder works for posterity. All human kind may pass over it without paying toll, but the builder of woodsheds works for self. He builds a place for his own little wood pile. The come-back boomerang of the bridge builder is a large heart and active brain, but the boomerang of the woodshed man is "ossification of the heart and fatty degeneration of the cerebrum." Keep young and be a bridge builder. After all old age is a matter of spirit and not of years. A person is just as old as he feels; he may be old at twenty or young at sixty.

Clams and oysters, bears and cuttlefish shut themselves away from the boomerang influence of youth. Look about you! All nature claps her hands in youthful glee. The trees of the field, the birds of the air, the rippling brooks fairly pelt us with their happy-natured boomerangs driving out the grump and the grouch and letting in gladness and contentment. *The best mental and spiritual equipment cannot grow sweet fruit from lemon seeds.*

An Indian legend has it that the bumble bee was indicted on the ground of being too noisy for the good of man, and so the spirits, evil and good, made an equal division of these noisy nuisances, the evil spirit transforming his half into hornets and the good spirit changing his to honey bees. Those not present when the division was made remained bumble bees. Thus, there are

three kinds of people in the world—the buzzers, the stingers and the honey makers. *“Work and smile and when in doubt mind your own business,”* is the motto of the honey maker.

Somehow these good natured boomerangs have a way of returning with their points up and lo! the lines of the face and the corners of the mouth turn up. Tell me the difference between this bit of clay and that radiant opal. The clay is clay; the opal is clay *plus a little sunshine.*

More than half of the world was an iceberg and the Lord of All commanded his angels to make it fertile. So the angels planted seeds in the iceberg but they would not grow. Then they commenced to dig with a view of planting the seed underneath the iceberg, yet centuries of digging found nothing but ice. Then the Boss-Angel, in his fury, importuned the north wind to blow and the snow and hail to pelt the iceberg but it only grew the larger. The angels gave up in despair. The Lord of All now commanded the zephyrs of the south to breathe upon the iceberg and the rays of the sun to kiss its cheek and in the darkness it disappeared, leaving in its place giant rivers of sparkling water and luxuriant zones of vegetation.

“When a bit of sunshine hits ye
After passing of a cloud;
When a fit of laughter gits ye
An’ yer spine is feelin’ proud;
Don’t fergit to up and fling it
At a soul that’s feelin’ blue,
For the minute that ye sling it
It’s a *boomerang* to you.”

—Jack Crawford.

PAY DAY

**You can laugh all you crave to laugh ;
Strict poise!
No rule in the school
Can stop the noise ;
If, man of joy,
You pay by the way,
And become a boy.**

**You can know all you want to know ;
Hard fact!
No scribe of the tribe
Can hold you back ;
If, to attain,
You pay by the way,
And give your brain.**

**You can play all you wish to play ;
Stolid face!
No dame of the game
Can stop your pace ;
If, in your length,
You pay by the way,
And give your strength.**

**You can toil all you care to toil ;
Big work !
No cheat on the street
Can make you shirk ;**

If, to appease,
You pay by the way,
And give your ease.

You can grow all you choose to grow;
Golden crown!
No czar on the bar
Can hold you down;
If, in the flood,
You pay by the way,
And give your blood.

You can be what you will to be;
God-man!
No force in the course
Can stay your hand;
If, in the strife,
You pay by the way,
And give your life.

Pay by the way, that is all;
Love to be loved is the call;
Death for your life, every hour
Gives to your soul eternal power.
Child of the wild,
That's the plan;
Pay by the way
For every man.

A LESSON ON JUDGING OTHERS

THE TONGUE

The tongue is the servant of impulse. It is likewise the servant of thought. Responding to impulse it is unruly; responding to thought it is ruled. The tongue has the power to sting like an adder or to heal like an herb. With it we hamper or help; we curse or bless.

Man is a *talking* animal whose growth has been conditioned largely by this blessed boon.

Deprive a dog of his bark and you kill the dog. Destroy the coloring of the leaf and the tree dies. Stop all the avenues of man's expression and you are guilty of homicide.

From the lumber tracts of the north each year millions of logs are rolled into the mountain stream whose strong currents carry them to the mill hundreds of miles south. The terror of the lumberman is the jam where thousands of logs pile one upon the other, each new arrival only adding to the extent of the disaster unless the jam is quickly broken.

Like such a river of the hills is the stream of consciousness laden with the logs of thought, and if these were not pulled out and made over into the lumber of words, the thought jam would become a menace to all. The vicious man is usually a man of few words. The energy which he would use in word expression is subverted to the development of the cave instincts within.

It is a plausible theory that if man were refused

word expression he would take it out in fighting, and if he were denied *this* privilege, he would end his life. The fact that the rational being fights less and talks more than he did in the remote ages is given as proof of this hypothesis.

Since man talks to save his life we may excuse him for seeming to love to excess his own voice and for deluging the world with his heavy lumber of words. But when man speaks he insists upon talking about his neighbors and here is our grievance.

Just as common colds sometimes lead to tuberculosis, the white plague of medicine, so common talk about others may lead to discord, the white plague of society.

How easy it is to judge our brother, and this faculty is not a modern accomplishment since the ancient discourse containing the greatest of all sayings; the Golden Rule, is introduced by "Judge not that ye be not judged."

Why do men misjudge others? Because of ignorance, because of prejudice, because they crave amusement and because occasionally they elect to injure.

(1) Lack of knowledge is probably the most common cause. It has been said that hell is paved with misunderstandings. The most of our regrets are the fruits of misunderstanding. The lawyer feeds on them and the divorce court exists because of them. We may fancy that the angels are busy chasing down misunderstandings. *If you have an enemy, then you misunderstand him and he misunderstands you. If you are blessed with a true friend, then have you found some one who understands you.* Thought is a mixture, one part being contributed by the writer and nine parts by the translator. We misjudge because we read into what we see so much of ourselves. It takes a rogue to catch a rogue and the

faults which we believe we see in others are often reflections.

One of the grievous mistakes of adult life is to read into the innocent words and activities of the child our own idiosyncracies.

Are you acquainted with a boy who prefers his chum's room to his own; who loves the street better than his home? Isn't it highly probable that such a youth is misunderstood?

Let us cultivate an understanding eye. Let us grow human sympathy. Let us learn not only to see ourselves as others see us but to see others as they see themselves. Let us be like children in our freedom from malice and forgetfulness of faults.

(2) How prone we are to misjudge those who live on different levels and are guided by a different philosophy! There are two ways of living, the *wrong* way and *our* way. The roots of prejudice are ages long and bigotry looms large as an obstacle to progress. Would not the white plague of discord be lessened if we cultivated more zealously the open mind?

(3) The average human craves amusement and to satisfy this longing he joins the group of gossipers and contributes his savory morsel to the *pickled repast*. To some the excitement incident to serving up the reputation of a friend is better than a moving picture show. And, mind you, the deepest cut possible is the *insinuation*, because the imagination paints a better picture than concrete facts.

The drip, drip, drip of water for centuries along the same line will split the hardest rock and so the rap, rap, rap of asperity against the reputation of an acquaintance will cleave the firmest character.

(4) There are a few who make a business of slandering; who seem to owe the world a grudge and they take it out in blasting the reputation of others. Perhaps these unfortunates grew to their present state of revilement because they themselves were misjudged. If these could realize that the hot words sent forth will surely return again only to burn holes in their own characters, it might help. People gradually learn to shun the slanderer as they would shun a plague.

Oh, what power the right word said at the right time and in the right way gathers unto itself! Like apples of gold in pictures of silver gracing every home. Like arrows of mercy piercing the ether of the ages to bless posterity.

A purpose of life is to make the tongue a servant of thought and not of impulse; to establish the habit of thinking twice, yea a hundred times if need be, before speaking.

A college professor in addressing a class of post graduates on the subject of the injustice of public sympathy exclaimed, "Who is that man in Kentucky who killed another and was sent to Congress?" In the silence which followed a man on the front seat arose and quietly said, "I am that man. I am Caleb Powers, but, Professor, I am not guilty."

When tempted to speak disparagingly of a friend, imagine him present. There he is sitting upon the front seat drinking in every word you say. Are you going to let words drop which may bring sorrow and shame to that face turned up to yours in kindly confidence?

The Oriental Rule is good. "*Before you speak of another ask yourself three questions: Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary.*"

HOW MUCH DO I OWE?

As I traveled the open way,
An unknown farmer was pitching hay;
He paused a moment to study my length,
And then to the fork he gave his strength;
When through the pungent air there came
A thought which stirred my lagging brain:
Industry must be my ready charmer;
This I owe to the unknown farmer.

As I hastened along the street,
An unknown trader I chanced to meet;
He glanced my way with steady eye,
Then touched his cap to say goodbye.
Something tumbled into my mind,
Something cogent, clearly defined:
Honesty to be the apt invader;
This I owe to the unknown trader.

As I crowded beyond the throng,
An unknown whistler passed along;
He looked at me and then away,
Continued his tune as if to say
Life is sad and the road so steep,
Safely store and forever keep
Happiness to salve the aching blister;
This I owe to the unknown whistler.

As I sauntered into the schools,
An unknown teacher was stating rules;
Her face toward me intently turned,

And into my soul a notion burned:
So cold the world, so hard the stress,
The one big thing you must possess,
Mercy to live in every feature;
This I owe to the unknown teacher.

Thus I wandered the whole world round,
Through sandy desert, field and town;
Everywhere I met a stranger
Be he doctor, lawyer, preacher, ranger,
He gave me strength to push my fight;
He gave me help to do the right
In case in him I found the best
His life could give to the urgent quest.

A LESSON ON FEARS

THE HEADLIGHT

The night express came speeding around the bend. The longest tangent in the world stretched before the train and here was an opportunity to make up time. Suddenly the whistle for down brakes startled the quiet of the night. "What's the matter, Hank?" shouted the conductor. "Bring on your red lantern," sharply replied the engineer as he pointed to the headlight of an oncoming train. There it was; a twinkling, murderous thing dancing between the rails of the single track.

After waiting twenty minutes the conductor again addressed the engineer, this time sardonically. "Hank," said he, "don't you think the headlight is a trifle higher up than it was a few moments ago?" With a mild oath Hank mounted the tender and the train moved on, now late by a full hour.

The headlight was only the planet Venus.

Many human engines face imaginary headlights. By them train after train of needed activity is brought to a standstill. Sometimes these ominous hallucinations are so compelling as to deprive one of his reason. Who is strong enough not to have a single imaginary fear?

These planets of obstruction are of three kinds, those which are *instinctive or subconscious*, many which result from *early impression* and a few which develop from *wrong thinking*.

To fear water, fire, snakes and spiders is instinctive. Probably these would not be objects of terror, if no man had ever been drowned in the water, burned by fire or bitten by snakes. As such fears do not necessarily militate against man's best work, we need not discuss them further.

Undue fear of the dark, of thunder and of ghosts, though somewhat instinctive, is largely a matter of childhood reaction.

"To pass through the open door of an unlighted room still sends the chill of fear down my back," says a man of forty. When he was a small child, the elder brother of this man jumped out at him from behind the door of his mother's bedroom with a spooky howl and with such violence as not only to throw the child to the floor but to send him into convulsions.

Another confesses to his mother's mode of sending him to bed. In case a command was needful, which was not often, she would point to the uncurtained window and whisper uncannily, "Don't you see that big black man looking through the window? To bed before he gets you!"

Such pranks committed in the name of fun or discipline are nefarious assaults on the sweet innocence of child life.

With the natural confidence which children have in the goodness of the world it is easy to train them to be unafraid and he who would instil fear in their hearts is a fit subject for the whipping post.

Being super-fearful of making a mistake or of death are fruits of wrong thinking. Some people are talking and walking ambiguities and equivocations because they fear to shoulder the possibility of being wrong. Ask

them for advice and they will give you uncertainties. Request them to state their position on a matter of moment and they will ramble off into vagaries which a Philadelphia lawyer could hardly unravel.

Obviously we need to give advice sparingly and should declare ourselves never impulsively and yet the times are many when we should strike from the shoulder and hit the matter squarely between the eyes.

The reputation of being elusive is not an enviable one since prevarication, unreliability and shallowness are its companions. "You can't put your finger on him." "He is foxy." "He is one of those sub station fellows, who stops before he arrives." Ask him a question and he dodges. Demand an explanation and he hedges.

The man who never makes an enemy or never makes a mistake, never accomplishes anything worthwhile.

The path of the fearless one may be bounded by blunders but it is straight and true, whereas the walk of the fearful is too winding and indistinct to be of any use to those who follow.

Be neither a dodger nor a hedger.

The most common fear and probably the most damaging, is the fear of death. Here is the planet Venus, that imaginary headlight which we fear most.

Terror relative to disease and accident belong to this same class. How often are we attacked by the very disease which we fear most! In medical science there are cases of originally healthy people fearing themselves into the clutches of a dreaded disease.

Only the unrighteous need fear death. Right minded people—those who are inclined to do the best thing in the right way can afford to face death fearlessly, since it

is simply a step into a world of greater opportunity. If death ends all then the God of nature is a law breaker. He has used millions of years to make this world fit for habitation. Other eons of time have been taken to evolve man to his present state of kingship. The movement has been upward from imperfection toward perfection. Gradually but surely has man climbed toward that perfect state which some call Heaven. Is it reasonable to suppose that the God of All is going to devote the ages to man's advancement only to snuff him out when fairly in sight of the goal? Is the spirit to be murdered simply because the human cloak has been worn threadbare? *It is incredible!* Reason, instinct, mind and soul rebel against such a thought!

When I burn a match the fumes pass into the atmosphere and the ash unites with the soil. If I had the power to call back the fumes, pick up the ash and unite them in the right proportion I would have the identical match. *This* according to the law of the indestructibility of matter. Fire changes the material form but never destroys it. If matter is for eternity, why not force which is a higher form of existence?

The human personality is a force which never dies.

For the righteous man death is his friend since it ushers him into a greater world of joy, peace and helpfulness.

The supposition that death means eternal rest is a banal fallacy. It contradicts all known laws of evolution. There are many who believe that if to sell goods is the work you love best here, then to sell goods will be your work hereafter; or if to teach school is the work you love best here, then to teach school will be your work hereafter.

He who fears most is he who fears fears which never arrive.

You are the engineer of your own life; is some planet delaying your train? The reliable engine driver centers his gaze upon that portion of the track where the headlight of his own engine shines brightest. These thoughts will tend to cultivate the engineer's eye:—"I am living each day about as well as I know how." "It is all coming out right anyway." "Let me fear nothing, not even death."

May I always hope for the best, prepare for the worst and take with calmness what comes.

Drive on, engineer, without fear. Open the throttle a little further, if in your judgment it seems safe. Slow down on the curves *but make the run on time.*

WHAT MATTERS?

Are you a clerk, a common shirk,
Who dupes the boss and all;
Friend and foe you take in tow
To make your fault look small?
To such I swear by all that's fair,
Don't be a muddy ratter.
Work, it appears, in a thousand years
Will build the things that matter.

Are you a lad who has not had
A chance to win the race;
A road of rocks, a school of knocks,
No help to speed your pace?
It's you I urge; without much splurge

To fill your job as hatter.
Just oil your gears; in a thousand years
The miles you go will matter.

Are you the one who has no fun
In the game of life, so dull;
All men are cads, hard after fads,
And you've become a cull?
To you I say, without delay,
Life needs the happy batter.
Forget your fears; in a thousand years
Your attitude will matter.

Are you a wife for needed strife,
Who gets no praise nor pay;
You burn the fish and drop the dish,
And want to run away?
To you I tell, for all that's well
Keep up the daily patter.
God sees and hears; in a thousand years
The home you save will matter.

A LESSON ON OUR MISTAKES

THE PLOW.

"No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit"——

Did you ever see a plowman at work? He does not usually plow around and around on the outside of the field but he strikes a back furrow through the center and plows on each side of this. In order to run the back furrow straight, the plowman must sight thru, selecting a landmark ahead towards which he must guide his plow. If he looks back, even for an instant, he may lose sight of his landmark and make an ugly break in the back furrow. Much may be said relative to the landmark which enables the man at the plow to run a straight furrow but we will pass this for a time and center a thoughtful eye upon the plowman whose business it is to plow.

There is nothing under the sun which nature despises more than *uselessness*. Everywhere it is cursed. The weed, which is a plant out of place and in consequence useless, is pulled up by the roots. Flies are swatted and rats are poisoned because they are useless. In the remote ages man's olfactory was sufficiently well developed to enable him to follow his prey by scent. But when it became unnecessary to use this ability the keen sense of smell ceased to be. Tuberculosis may result from un-

used lung cells; paralysis, from unused brain cells. If you want to send a man to hell, put him in prison with nothing to do, or give him a million dollars with no occasion to do. Yea, verily, nature places the stamp of Cain upon the useless.

To escape the curse *we must plow*. The prisons and almshouses are filled with unfortunates who could not or would not put their hands to the plow.

No man having refused to put his hands to the plow is fit. Plow or be cursed.

Useful work, if there is not too much of it, is man's greatest blessing since work tames the animal within and enables the body and mind to develop harmoniously.

Were not this globe dusty and noisy with useful work, it would be a howling pandemonium. Idleness is the father and mother of vice. "Nothing-to-do" is a watered garden where Lucifer sows his tares.

It is quite impossible for the plowman to strike an absolutely straight furrow since there are stones and roots in the way.

When we put our hands to the plow we are bound to make mistakes since ignorance and willfulness are in the way. But plow we must; and shall we look back? If we do, then we make ourselves unfit.

Said the captain to the pilot, "We have lost our compass but steer toward the north star." Said the pilot to the captain, "There is a black cloud between us and the north star." "Then," replied the captain, "steer where you know the north star *ought* to be and wait until the cloud passes."

Behind every mistake there is a heavenly light. Let us watch for it till the cloud passes. It is a high crime to rebel against or to mourn for or to pout about our

mistakes, since in and through the mistake is a rich blessing which mournful or rebellious eyes may never see.

What is that egregious mistake which you made in your teens and for which you are still wearing black? It was no doubt inexcusable. One with your brain, culture and training should have known better. Look at the mistake from every side, turning it over and over. Scold yourself to your heart's content. Then ferret out the motive and the thoughts and feelings which made the motive possible. Finally, with set jaw, determine that such thoughts and feelings shall never again profane your brain and heart. Having thus ventilated that awful mistake and caught the light back of it, *proceed at once to forget it*. What is the mistake of yesterday that it should color with sorrow your once happy soul? Look at it with the determination to get from it the life lesson which it holds and then bury it deep in forgetfulness. *We climb to more stately mansions on the ladder of our mistakes.*

If there is an unpardonable sin, it is the error of committing the same mistake again and again. We may not be barred from Heaven by the one great mistake committed *once* but rather by the one little mistake committed a *thousand times*.

By looking back at our mistakes or even our successes we may lose sight of the landmark, our ideal. Center the eye upon that good and efficient worker which you are bound to be; that ideal which stands out so distinctly against the blue sky of your constructive imagination.

You are going to be the best and most efficient clerk in the store, the best and most efficient teacher in the

system. *You*, Madam, will be the sweetest and most helpful wife that a man could ever hope for; and you, Sir, the most comfortable, the most thoughtful and the most appreciative husband that woman could ever construct in her finest love dream. Yes, it is the backward look of regret which unnerves us; that gnawing anguish of the unforgotten mistake which shadows our ideals, sours our temperament and unnerves the will.

Plow, dear plowman, plow! Turn the furrow deep and straight and beware of that backward look which may damn you as an undesirable citizen of the universe.

The world is for the man who plows straight to the landmark.

GHOSTS OF THE PAST

On the crest of yon hillside
Stood an earnest tempered man;
When approached a robed specter,
A filled measure in his hand.
"I've come a bonded agent
Of the wereghosts of the past,
Having filled my deep measure
With the mistakes you have cast.
I hold in my hand-grip
Opportunities you've lost,
And the size of this measure
Reveals the heart breaks you've cost.
You must pay for these bloodmarks
You've scarred on mankind,
By loss of contentment
And your sweet peace of mind."

The man looked at the measure
With a deep flush of real shame.
As he thought of these errors
Standing against his good name,
His soul moaned in anguish
At needed duties undone;
At the web of his efforts
So vaingloriously spun.
When, behold, on the instant
The fog lifted from the knoll
And there came by his vision
A gladdened sight to his soul.
Pictured deep in yon azure
Against the vault of the sky
Was a scene of the home-life,
The early days of gone-by.
Sitting deep in her arm chair
In attitude of love
Was the form of his mother,
A crowning halo above.
On the floor just beside her
Sat his brother with himself;
Two boys in deep contrition
For the day's ill gotten pelf;
Telltale pockets in trousers,
Bulging large with stolen goods
From the trees of an orchard,
Hidden securely by the woods.

Could the look of that mother,
As she smiled behind her tears
Be forever forgotten
By the turmoil of the years?
Could the voice of that mother,
Fail to leave a lasting mark
By which judgment of Heaven
Could measure a beating heart?

"Go over on the morrow
To the neighbor at his task,
Return to him his apples,
Or pay him what he asks.
Then just promise your mother,
That you will try to refrain
From stealing the red apple,
When you pass by it again."

Turned the man to the specter
To look him straight in the eye,
And to give him a reason
Why healing peace could not die:
"The God-love in the mother
Is ever true to its own;
Has the God-love of heaven
Smaller power to atone?
Or is mercy still flowing
Around the base of the throne,
That the price of man's errors
May be paid by it alone?
So, begone, thou false prophet,
Cruel murderer of mind-peace;
May the sin of your error
Bring to the world a surcease
Of judging a man's effort
By the mistakes in his name,
Holding over him ever
The faulty moves in his game."
To recall forgotten failures,
Which are beyond all repair,
Simply weakens one's effort
To that of hopeless despair.
All men who are right minded
Will have paid the full price
By giving their best effort
To the work of their choice.

A LESSON ON IDEALS

THAT STAR

The brilliant star Vega marks a point in space of peculiar interest to the astronomer. From this resplendent five pointed light as a center the neighboring stars have seemed to move out as along the spokes of a wheel. The phenomenon is explained by the interesting hypothesis that the solar system is advancing upon Vega at the rate of 12 miles a second. Because of this onward movement our world in its revolution about the sun is describing in space a progressive spiral. Around and around we swing each return finding us nearer this point in the heavens known as the "sun's goal."

The burning monster Vega is a hundred times the size of our sun. From afar both appear to be stars; in reality both are suns. Obviously old earth is being piloted toward a greater star by a smaller one—a dwarfed light leading us on to an orb whose brilliancy is beyond conception.

In like degree has mankind advanced. His motion in the eternities, a spiral; each revolution finding him nearer that point in time which marks the final goal: piloted by a pigmy star to that Vega of the faraway sky, ultimate destiny. These smaller suns which guide us onward are the ideals of men and that Vega in the heavenly way is the ideal of God. The one is human perfection, the other is divine perfection. Your ideal is

your highest notion of what you ought to be. The Father's ideal is a perfect conception of a perfect man. Is the ultimate meaning of life now clear to you? Is there any doubt as to why you are here? Avowedly all creation is planned to further your growth toward that perfect standard the ideal of the divine, the Vega of the ages. The Nation that fails to glimpse this five pointed light is doomed, and the individual who sees not this abiding star goes down to failure. Nature kills that which will not grow. Every power of body and spirit pleads, "Let me grow." Says memory, judgment and conscience, "Use me or lose me." Are you growing toward the perfect ideal? Are you a better person today than you were yesterday? Are you using rightly and fully every power? If not, then like a basswood tree you have commenced to wither at the top and some day you will be hewn down and cast out into the brush pile of uselessness. A business house must keep abreast with the times or enter bankruptcy. A physician must study diligently or lose his practice. A teacher must be an open minded student all his days or become a back number. *Get into the upward pull and live! Slide into the air current of world progress and achieve!*

Of the members of the solar system the sun is in absolute control. To him the poles of the earth are bound as with great rods of iron. To possess ideals is a wrong way of putting it. The ideals must possess us, body and soul. Your human ideals, made imperfect by your limitations, must lead you to the great Vega, the *All-Perfect*. Gradually but surely we proceed along the spiral of the years. In a measure history repeats itself. Each year, decade and century we experience similar happenings. Our heart sorrows and world failures are

ages old, yet each revolution brings us nearer to the Great Ideal; a degree closer to our eternal Exemplar. The world life is the old slightly colored with new visions; her thoughts are a trifle purer, her feelings a bit sweeter, her activities a whit nobler. *Thus it is we are led by our human ideals and aspirations along that spiral path which ends in perfection, the apex of the human way.*

The earth in following the lead of the sun never overtakes it. A man must never catch up with his ideals, if he is to be led to a perfect state. Here is where many fail. Having succeeded in his laudable ambition it is easy for one to become self satisfied; to sit by the roadside with back turned to the upward climb, leering cynically at those who are far below. Hitch your wagon to a star or soon an ash cart will have it in tow. Aim at the zenith and you will hit the moon; aim at the moon and you will hit the gate post; aim at the gate post and the bullet of your ambition will proceed no further than the dust under your feet. *Chase your ideals but never catch them!* On touching the first, project another higher up!

Ideals must be constant. Just as Vega and the sun have survived the friction of time, so true ideals must endure forever; must possess "survival value." Only those qualities have eternal existence which live after death, live as accretions to the human soul and live as influences in the hearts of men. One nation's ideal was beauty and intellectual acumen; another's physical bravery and power to command. Now we look in vain for the glory of Greece and Rome. Their ideals were only temporary.

The attributes which have lived as aspirations may be summarized under five heads, each typified by a

star point. Here they are endowed with life everlasting—the only chattels which have permanently enriched man's being. 1. *Integrity*. 2. *Charity*. 3. *Mentality*. 4. *Judgment*. 5. *Perseverance*.

1. INTEGRITY.

Are you honest, sincere and habitually upright? Are your motives above suspicion and have you passed through the fiery furnace of temptation unimpaired? Are you incorruptible, clean, true and morally sound? Are you one who can neither be bought, forced nor cajoled by sinister influence? Are you faithful to a righteous cause and true to mankind? After the giant bell is taken from the mould every square inch of its surface is sharply rapped with a mallet. If there is one spot which does not sound true, then is the bell pronounced imperfect. To the world's testing mallet do you always sound true?

2. CHARITY.

Integrity without charity is justice without heart, rectitude without sympathy. Charity betokens tenderness, generosity, liberality in judgment, mercy in punishment. It likewise implies a kindly nature, good temper and a radiant sunshine. Bears and cuttle fish are not charitable. Are you free with your smiles and gracious in your greetings? Is your gift of speech a Pandora chest or an alabaster box? Are you a stove or an iceberg? Do you bear the world a grudge or is your heart shot through with a spirit of good will? Have you that quality of mercy which, with infinite tenderness, folds its arms about a weak, tired humanity? World-love, this is charity.

3. MENTALITY.

A concept which includes mental alertness, intellectual activity and acumen. Have you poured your money into your brain or into your pocket? Have you educated every cell of your cerebrum and trained yourself to originality and independence in thought and action? Do you long to improve and have you a passion for the truth? Are you free from blind prejudice and open to conviction? Do you think your own ideas or do you buy them? Are you a mental sponge or a thought giving dynamo? Have you graduated from the school of life or are you a painstaking student seeking always for the sweets of knowledge and wisdom? In this day of free schools and libraries stupidity is inexcusable and ignorance is a sin.

4. SOUND JUDGMENT.

Proportion, good sense, discernment, penetration, these are the synonyms of sound judgment. It is the power to recognize true relations and decide upon the wisest course. Poor judgment sees in the shining paste a sparkling diamond and pronounces the costly ruby a worthless lump of clay. Sound judgment is a prophet—is a seer who looks into the future and prepares for the worst. A man who makes good wherever you place him and uses his talent to the limit is one of good judgment. At the base of the Washington Monument many birds fall dead. Speeding through the shadows of early morn they dash their brains against this unseen, cold, gray shaft of stone. Because of poor judgment men dash their hopes against some unexpected obstacle. There they lie at the base of a monumental event—a countless number, murdered by a wrong decision. Judgment and

mentality beget wisdom and wisdom is the power to do the right thing, in the right way, at the right time for the sake of righteousness.

5. PERSEVERANCE.

Perseverance connotes industry, application, steadiness, sustained labor. Have you the power to hold fast to the finish? Can you "toil terribly" and continue to the end? Having failed ninety-nine times will you make the hundredth attempt with the same unabated determination to win. There, out in the cold of man's disdain—out in the darkness of abject failure will you struggle on alone, using yourself up for that which has spurned you? It is claimed that only one out of one hundred really succeed. What about the ninety and nine, had they perseverance? Success is more difficult than of yore—there seems to be less room at the top. Yet somewhere between the cradle and the grave every man is given a chance.

The earth has no light of its own, it merely reflects the rays of the sun. To outside space the world is lost in the sunlight. *To lose oneself in reflecting the ideal*, this is the one searching test. The more men think about themselves the less they are. How many selfish Adams are standing in their own light.

The most powerful monster of the sea is the iceberg. No mechanism of man can stem its onward drift. Why? Because nine-tenths of its bulk is below the water line. Oh, to be lost in the seething depths of earthly toil! Says Stevenson, "We chop, chop, chop, but are denied the satisfaction of seeing the chips fly." History calls many great, but he who loses himself in his simple duty and forgets to reach for any reward is great.

est in all history. He it is who casts his bread upon the water and immediately turns to the task of the next hour. He who tarries expecting an angel cake in return shrivels as he waits.

Asked Tolstoi of a Russian ploughman, "If you knew you were to die tonight, what would you do for the rest of the afternoon?" The ploughman looked at his ox, at his plough, at the well turned furrow and finally his deep set eye steadied itself to the face of the great philosopher and the answer came, "*Master, I would plough.*"

We play best in obliviousness; we work best in unselfishness; we live best in forgetfulness. *To lose oneself in reflecting the everlasting ideal, this is the highest duty of man.*

AT ROOSEVELT'S GRAVE

Man of our country! Man among men!
You loved the common people,
You gave your life to them.
You climbed the rugged mountain;
You faced the lion's den;
You fought for highest welfare;
Laid waste the devil's fen.

Man of the people! Warrior of right!
To your tomb march the thousands,
Because we loved your might.
As we gather on the hilltop,
There comes to our gladdened sight
A multitude of qualities,
Which lift to starry height.

Man of the spaces! Ruler of clans!
You'll plead our cherished mandates,
Defend our troubled lands.
Forgive our blind willfulness,
Forget our awkward hands;
We left you alone fighting
Cantank'rous pirate bands.

Man of the ages! Giant alone!
You called to us a slogan,
Echoed from zone to zone:
"To fight for strongest manhood;
"To guard our sacred home."
May Columbia be forever
A field where men are grown.

A LESSON ON THE GREATEST, STRONGEST AND BEST

THE SEED CORN

A gardener held in the palm of his hand two kernels of corn. They resembled each other so closely that even his experienced eye could detect no difference. With the hope of the experimentalist in his heart he planted the two seeds side by side. Soon one tiny mound gave evidence of a blade of green which rapidly grew into a vigorous stalk of corn. But the other mound remained dull and dead. And after weeks of waiting the hope in the gardener's heart likewise became dull and dead. The experiment had failed. The kernel of corn which would not grow was a product of the laboratory, containing the same elements and in the same proportion as the corn of nature but it would not, it could not grow—this seed made by man.

In spite of all his experience and wisdom the gardener-biologist was unable to induce the child of his brain to grow. Morning after morning he would visit the little hill of dirt only to have that great yearning in his soul shocked into bitter disappointment. This shovelful of inanimate dirt contained years of devoted labor—the best effort of his brain. He almost cursed the other hill which in its easy growth seemed to mock his failure.

The one grew and the other grew not because the one *had life* and the other possessed it not.

All the scientific knowledge in the world could not surcharge this seed of the laboratory with life, *organized life, the greatest force in the universe.*

Everywhere does the greatness of growing things mystify man.

In the side of the barn had been driven in a helter-skelter fashion a dozen nails. At the foundation, in the spring, a sprig of a grape vine commenced to creep up towards the light. In the fall the observer was surprised to find that every "rusty eight penny" had been mustered into the service of the aggressive grape vine. If the nails had been driven regularly in the line of the vine's growth, the preemption would have passed unnoticed but they had been placed helter-skelter and yet about every one was entwined with a deathlike grip a grapevine tendril. The nails had been sought out with a definite purpose.

Plant a tree where you will and the roots will seek and find the richest soil.

Life, greater than any horticulturist, will change a desert into an Eden. Life, greater than any scientist, will shape from a salamander an eagle. Life is a god who creates in his own image.

The sun shines and the rain falls that there may be life. The mother plant gives of her vitality and dies that there may be life. Eternity exists that there may be life. *Life, the greatest thing in the world!*

Life builds according to law. Out of the kernel of corn comes a stalk. This grows up according to the law, "All plants grow toward the light." Put hard, unyielding rock on the seed and it will send its stalk

around it, provided there is light above. Growth towards the light will move the heaviest boulder, will crack the hardest rock. Nothing is quite strong enough to break a law. Nothing has power to disturb the constancy even of one of nature's laws. Men do not break laws but rather do laws break men. Are you suffering from some horrible accident? Then some man has tried to break a law. Are you experiencing a thousand little hells every day? Then some one has grown not according to law. Sin is life disobeying law. Even God himself cannot break one of His own laws. *Law is the strongest thing in the world.*

Look into space and the stars which light its depths are innumerable. With each new telescope the added power reveals more stars and even then those which are not seen give more light than those which are. Indeed, their number seems to be infinite. Each star is a sun like our own and about each are, no doubt, inhabited planets like our own. This innumerable caravan of giant bodies rolling through space at tremendous speed is held to the path by law—the law of gravitation.

Looking back into the dim and dateless past the mind's eye sees the globe one great ocean. On its surface, here and there, are jelly like substances, whose one characteristic seems to be to wiggle. Ages pass and one of these kicking things touches an island and becomes a worm. Other eons of years pass and the grovelling worm commences to crawl up a tree and becomes an ape. Then in turn this gibbering simian walks the face of the globe, its master. Thus from a one celled water wriggler has life, through *law*, built a *man*.

Life, the best thing in the world, is ordered by law, the strongest thing in the world.

Why does the blade of corn grow toward the light? Why do the branches in the shade of the forest turn up toward the light? There is just one answer, *because they love the light*. All plant life loves light more than anything else and therefore grows toward the light more than in any other direction. Love for more light is the lifting power of the vegetable world. The entire kingdom grows toward that which it loves most.

It is thus with the human plant; he gravitates toward that which he loves best. Man and wife who love each other much grow to look alike. An individual drifts toward the pet thought of his heart because he loves it. *Love is the best thing in the world*.

On better acquaintance some people seem to grow better looking even to beauty, while others, as we learn them, seem to grow homely even to ugliness. This is *character* shining through, or it is the personality growing to look like the most cherished desires and thoughts of the heart and mind. Love of the ignoble brings ugliness, whereas love of the noble engenders beauty. *Blessed is the one who grows better looking on better acquaintance. Do you?*

Life, the greatest thing in the world, is regulated by law, the strongest thing in the world and lifted up by love, the best thing in the world. Here, then, are the Big Three: Life the greatest, ordered by Law the strongest, inspired by Love the best.

In a drop of blood there are millions of little cells engaged in removing the old and building the new. Life is a master builder, who has in his employ billions of microscopic workmen laboring untiringly day and night.

The master builder within is building two cities side by side: the one is Heaven, the other is Hell. The one

is founded on law and roofed with love, the other is built upon license and covered with hate.

A thought or act seems to crease the nervous system as an iron creases cloth, making it easy to follow that crease ever after. This illustrates the power of habit. We are creatures of our habitual thoughts and actions. When a man first thinks an unworthy thought he lays the foundation for a hovel in hell. When he first executes an unholy deed he stakes out a street in hell. Soon the hovel is built and the street is paved. Then must he live in the hovel and walk in the street of his *own* hell.

"A good man fallen" is not the way of putting it. It is "the bad man *found out*." Goodness and badness are not the offshoots of impulse but a matter of growth; of long building. Hell shows through in time.

With those of us who are willing to think of these matters there is too much wisdom to actually build on the main street of hell. Our building is only in the *sub-urbs*. The little exaggeration, or the act which merely suggests deceit, or the unworthy thought which is only fleeting. This is suburban—a case of building along the border of Hell and, having built, *there* must we live.

Often from the masonry of hell may heaven be built; this through the dynamic force of love.

I am told of a man over sixty who surprised his wife by the announcement that he was going to give up the use of tobacco and all forms of spirituous liquors. The resolve made in the quiet of the evening was never broken. The only explanation for such phenomenal determination was the father's great love for his children and his deep anxiety for their upbringing.

When one really desires to forsake a street in hell he

may do so by developing a genuine love for a corresponding street in heaven. If deep enough and lasting enough, love will break the strongest habit and sweeten the vilest thought.

One who is given to white lies may grow in himself an abiding love for the exact truth. In the light of this love he will idolize perfect examples of rectitude; he will strive to imitate those who are never troubled by the "white pest;" he will set for himself little lessons in truth telling, never deviating a hair's breadth from the exact fact as he saw or heard it. With the perseverance of a giant he will fight it out on that line if it takes a lifetime. Thus any good habit may be formed from the material of a bad habit.

Blessed are they whose lives are set in order by law and whose activities are raised to the nth power of efficiency through love.

Establish an affinity for that virtue which you ought to emulate and lo, it is yours. Fall in love with that pure, honest and noble individual which you ought to be and lo, you are he.

Build heaven, My Life, build heaven! Every word said in kindness will be a marble palace in your New Jerusalem; every deed done in unselfishness will be a golden street in your Great White City. And when the eyes are dimmed and the hands are enfeebled by a century of heaven building, then it is that you may *live* in that place of untold love, a heart filled with a blessedness yet unknown.

THE GREATEST BUILDER

It is not the steam of the engine,
Which sends it along the line;
It is not the fire of the boiler,
Which brings it athwart on time;
It is this: the man who kindles
The fire which ignites the coal;
Just this the thing of the engine,
Which sends it on to its goal.

It is not the chisel or mallet,
Which gives to the angel form;
It is not the finger directing,
That creates a thing unborn;
It is this: the power of genius,
Which etches the face on stone,
And transmutes the rough of the marble
To something of flesh and bone.

Depicted by the books of knowledge,
Which are writ for us to drink;
Debated by some of the learned,
Who inspire the youth to think;
Is the motive, the spur of effort,
Which goads us along the way;
It is this, so scholars tell us,
Which controls us day by day.

But to men who've had experience,
Been shown what is deep and true,
There is something back of the motive,
That erects it wholly new;
A force that measures and shapes it,

And inspires to upper height;
Shall we call it, "Builder of Builders,"
This power which builds us right?

Would we find the Builder of Builders
To repair our faulty car?
Then our life must be in adjustment
With conditions as they are.
In tune with the creating forces,
In step with the superfine;
When the mighty hand of the Builder
Will mend us for all time.

THE MARCH OF MAN

Out stole the cave man, gazed toward the west
At the scarlet sunset on the mountain crest;
The unforgotten glory of that western sky
Crept into his marrow and refused to die;
Unmolested hunting, much safer homes
Promised the golden sunset in silent tones.
'Twas thus the urge possessed him, this missing link,
Back in the primeval, a time indistinct.

From the banks of rivers, their harvest all done,
Marched the barbarians in step with the sun;
Rice and corn aplenty awaited them there,
This ruddy west of promise, the Land of Nowhere.
Enduring all hardship, cutting through the wood,
The cause of their travel not understood.
On toward their nimbus, advanced ancient clans
To stamp growing manhood on the newer lands.

Westward went Columbus and the pioneers,
Facing sea and forest as conquering peers;
Lashed to the battle by promise of the sun
Of gold for the coffers and game for the gun;
Settled the wilderness with courage unknown;
Planted there happiness for the modern home.
"Twas thus that history built the foundations
For the sturdy upgrowth of the coming nations.
The intent of this epic is to ask you where
Are now the lands of promise to make men dare?
Was the long march ended at Pacific coast?
Is there naught now to conquer for the seething host?

Our keen gaze outward toward the western sky,
Gives to us an answer to the urgent why.
The sun ever beckons to the eerie west,
On and on for alway, everlasting quest;
O'ertake ancient footsteps in white sands of time,
Cover the deep bloodmarks with fruit tree and vine;
Scrap the tools of war lust, pois'nous gas abate,
Save our boys for manhood, banish national hate!
Fill our ships with cotton and sun-kissed wheat;
Provide fuller markets that the starved may eat.
Thus shall we follow the glory of the sun,
Rewarded by Jehovah in the words "Well done."

Megaphone the peace call toward yonder lands,
Give to them in friendship honest, open hands;
Judge them in equity by the golden rule,
Deal with them as human of a different school.
Thus will sin of warfare whiten as the snow,
Washed in the fellowship of forgiven foe;
Call to all the nations by tongue and pen,
"Make your alterations for the Brotherhood of Men!"



